

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present U.S. Patent application as amended herein. Claim 6 has been cancelled without prejudice. Claims 1, 7-8, 10, 12, 16-22, and 27-28 have been amended. Therefore, claims 1-5, and 7-28 are pending.

The undersigned attorney had an interview with the Examiner on November 19, 2002. The allowable subject matter was discussed. The Examiner clarified that claim 22 would be allowable if rewritten to include the limitation that the lending library client be separate from the lending library server.

In the Office Action, there were cited informalities in the drawings. In response, Applicants are submitting new corrected drawings. A separate letter is being sent to the draftsman as set forth in MPEP §608.02(r). Applicants respectfully request acceptance of these amended Figures because no substantive new matter has been added.

The Specification has been amended to correct typographical errors. No substantive new matter has been added.

Claims 1-3, 12-13, 16-19, and 21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,937,863 issued to Robert et al. Claims 22-26, and 28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,745,879 as issued to Wyman. Claims 4-5, 11, 14-15, 20, and 27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over Robert et al. in view of Patent No. 5,892,900 issued to Ginter et al. Claims 6-10 are objected to as being dependent on a rejected base claim. The Office Action indicated that claims 6-10 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Applicants appreciate the Examiner pointing out and clarifying the allowable subject matter. To expedite the allowance of the application, claims 1, 12, 16, and 22 have been amended to incorporate the allowable subject matter into the claims.

Claim 1, as amended, recites the following:

- a electronic asset lending library database containing a plurality of user accounts and at least one license for one of a plurality of unused electronic assets;
- an account manager to maintain the user accounts;
- an asset manager to maintain the licenses for the unused electronic assets;
- a loan manager to control the borrowing of the license for the unused electronic asset by a borrower having a one of the plurality of user accounts; and
- a notification manager to notify the borrower when the loan manager approves a loan to the borrower of the license for the unused electronic asset.

As indicated in the Office Action, none of the cited prior art references disclose the features of claim 1 with a notification manager to notify the borrower when a loan to the borrower of the license for the unused electronic asset is approved. Claims 12 and 16 similarly recite a feature of notifying the borrower when a loan to the borrower of the license for the unused electronic asset is approved. Therefore, Applicants submit that claims 1, 12, and 16 as amended are allowable over the cited references.

Claims 2-5, 7-11, 13-15, 17-21, and 27-28 are dependent claims and distinguish for at least the same reasons as their independent base claims in addition to adding further limitations of their own. Therefore, Applicant submits that claims 2-5, 7-11, 13-15, 17-21, and 27-28 are allowable over the cited references for at the least the reasons set forth above.

Claim 22 recites the following:

- generating a license and associated license restrictions for an unused electronic asset on a lending library server;
- displaying to a borrower the license and associated license restrictions on a lending library client, wherein the lending library client is separate from the lending library server;
- receiving a borrower selection for the license and transferring the license to the borrower if eligible in accordance with the associated license restrictions; and
- transmitting to the borrower instructions for the installation of the unused electronic asset in compliance with the transferred license on the lending library client.

As indicated in the Office Action and clarified in the interview with the Examiner, none of the cited references disclose the features of claim 22 with the lending library client separate

from the lending library server. Therefore, Applicants submit that amended claim 22 is allowable over the cited references.

Claims 23-26 are dependent claims and distinguish for at least the same reasons as their independent base claims in addition to adding further limitations of their own. Therefore, Applicants submit that claims 23-26 are allowable over the cited references for at the least the reasons set forth above.

CONCLUSION

In view of the amendments and remarks set forth above, it is respectfully submitted that pending claims 1-5 and 7-28 are in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully solicited. The Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned by telephone if such contact would further the examination of the present application.

Please charge any shortages and credit any overcharges to our Deposit Account number 02-2666.

Respectfully submitted,
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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

IN THE SPECIFICATION

Amendments in paragraph on page 8, line 6-20:

Referring now to **Figure 3**, wherein a block diagram of a general-purpose computer system upon which an embodiment of the present invention may be implemented is shown. As illustrated, general-purpose computer system **300** comprises a bus **301**, or other communications hardware and software, for communicating information, and a processor ~~[302]~~ 305 coupled with bus **301** for processing information. Computer system **300** further comprises a random access memory (RAM) or other dynamic storage device **302** (referred to as main memory), coupled to bus **301** for storing information and instructions to be executed by processor ~~[302]~~ 305.

Computer system **300** also comprises a read only memory (ROM) **303**, and/or other static storage device, coupled to bus **301** for storing static information and instructions for processor ~~[302]~~ 305.

Mass storage device **304** is coupled to bus **301** for storing information and instructions. In one embodiment, mass storage device **304** includes a library of licenses and client accounts used to manage the lending and borrowing of the available electronic assets by various electronic asset lending library clients.

IN THE CLAIMS

Please cancel claim 6 without prejudice, and amend claims 1, 7-8, 10, 12, 16-22, and 27-28 as follows:

1. (Amended) In a general-purpose computer system, a lending library apparatus comprising:
 - a electronic asset lending library database containing a plurality of user accounts and at least one license for one of a plurality of unused electronic assets;
 - an account manager to maintain the user accounts; [and]
 - an asset manager to maintain the licenses for the unused electronic assets; [and]
 - a loan manager to control the borrowing of the license for the unused electronic asset by a borrower having a one of the plurality of user accounts; and
 - a notification manager to notify the borrower when the loan manager approves a loan to the borrower of the license for the unused electronic asset.
2. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the loan manager further controls the lending of the license for the unused electronic asset by a lender having another one of the plurality of user accounts.
3. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein:
 - the account manager further maintains a subset of the plurality of user accounts as members of a one of a plurality of communities;
 - the asset manager further maintains ownership of the license by one of the communities;
 - and
 - the loan manager restricts the borrowing of the license for the unused electronic asset to a borrower having a user account membership in the same community having ownership of the license.
4. The apparatus of claim 3 wherein:
 - the account manager further maintains a subset of the plurality of user accounts as members of a one of a plurality of access control lists;

the asset manager further maintains an association between the access control list and the unused electronic asset; and

the loan manager further restricts the borrowing of the license for the unused electronic asset to a borrower having a user account listed in the access control list associated with the unused electronic asset.

5. The apparatus of claim 4, wherein the access control list restriction is overridden in response to a request by a borrower not having a user account listed in the access control list associated with the unused electronic asset.
6. (Cancelled) The apparatus of claim 1, further comprising:
a notification manager to notify the borrower when the loan manager approves a loan to the borrower of the license for the unused electronic asset.
7. (Amended) The apparatus of claim [6] 1, wherein the borrower notification is an electronic message addressed to the borrower and containing written instructions for installing for downloading the unused electronic asset.
8. (Amended) The apparatus of claim [6] 1, wherein the notification is communicated over a communications network.
9. The apparatus of claim 8, wherein the communications network is the Internet.
10. (Amended) The apparatus of claim [6] 1, further comprising:
an electronic distribution mechanism to automatically install the unused electronic asset on the borrower's computer in response to the loan approval.
11. The apparatus of claim 3 wherein a community is one of a plurality of types of intra-organizational entities, including a project team, department, or division.

12. (Amended) A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions for performing:
managing a plurality of user accounts;
managing at least one license for one of a plurality of unused electronic assets; [and]
controlling the borrowing of the at least one license for the unused electronic asset by a borrower having a one of the plurality of user accounts; and
notifying the borrower when a loan to the borrower of the license for the unused electronic asset is approved.
13. The computer-readable medium of claim 12 wherein:
managing the plurality of user accounts includes associating each user account with a one of a plurality of communities;
managing the license includes associating the license with a one of the plurality of communities and assigning the license to one of the plurality of user accounts; and
controlling further includes restricting the borrowing to eligible borrowers, wherein an eligible borrower is associated with the same community as the license.
14. The computer-readable medium of claim 13 having computer-executable instructions for further performing:
displaying the plurality of unused electronic assets; and
reassigning the at least one license to a second one of the plurality of accounts in response to a selection of a one of the plurality of unused electronic assets from the display by a borrower using the second one of the plurality of accounts.
15. The computer-readable medium of claim 14 wherein:
managing the plurality of user accounts includes adding or deleting each user account into at least one of a plurality of access control lists or not;
managing the license includes associating the unused electronic asset with a one of the plurality of access control lists; and
controlling further includes restricting the borrowing to a borrower listed on the access control list to which the electronic asset is assigned.

16. (Amended) A method comprising:
managing a plurality of user accounts;
managing at least one license for one of a plurality of unused electronic assets;
controlling the borrowing of the at least one license for the unused electronic asset by a
borrower having a one of the plurality of user accounts; and
notifying the borrower when a loan to the borrower of the license for the unused
electronic asset is approved
[creating a license for an unused electronic asset;
assigning the license to a first account having membership in one of a plurality of
communities;
re-assigning the license from the first account to a second account if the second account is
eligible to use the license and has membership in the same one of a plurality of communities as
the first account].
17. (Amended) The method of claim 16, wherein [further comprising]:
managing the plurality of user accounts includes associating each user account with a one
of a plurality of communities;
managing the license includes associating the license with a one of the plurality of
communities and assigning the license to one of the plurality of user accounts; and
controlling further includes restricting the borrowing to eligible borrowers, wherein an
eligible borrower is associated with the same community as the license
[communicating to a user of the second account information about the unused electronic
asset, including whether the license is available, and wherein the license is reassigned to the
second account only after receiving a request from the user].
18. (Amended) The method of claim [16] 17, wherein the one of a plurality of
communities is an organizational entity, including a division, department or team.
19. (Amended) The method of claim 16, further comprising displaying the plurality of
unused electronic assets

[wherein the second account is eligible to use the license if the second account is listed on an access control list for the unused electronic asset].

20. (Amended) The method of claim [17] 19, further comprising reassigning the at least one license to a second one of the plurality of accounts in response to a selection of a one of the plurality of unused electronic assets from the display by a borrower using the second one of the plurality of accounts

[wherein communication to the user of the second account is disabled if the second account is not a member of the same community as the first account].

21. (Amended) The method of claim [19] 16, wherein:
managing the plurality of user accounts includes adding or deleting each user account into at least one of a plurality of access control lists or not;

managing the license includes associating the unused electronic asset with a one of the plurality of access control lists; and

controlling further includes restricting the borrowing to a borrower listed on the access control list to which the electronic asset is assigned

[wherein the second account is not eligible because not listed on the access control list for the unused electronic asset, but subsequently determined to be eligible in response to an override request received from the user of the second account].

22. (Amended) A computer implemented method comprising:
generating a license and associated license restrictions for an unused electronic asset on a lending library server;

displaying to a borrower the license and associated license restrictions on a lending library client, wherein the lending library client is separate from the lending library server;

receiving a borrower selection for the license and transferring the license to the borrower if eligible in accordance with the associated license restrictions; and

transmitting to the borrower instructions for the installation of the unused electronic asset in compliance with the transferred license on the lending library client.

23. The method of claim 22, wherein the lending library server and the lending library client are connected to a communications network.
24. The method of claim 22, wherein the associated license restrictions require the borrower to belong to a community, the community being the same community to which the unused electronic asset belongs.
25. The method of claim 24, wherein the associated license restrictions further require the borrower to be listed on an access control list associated with the unused electronic asset.
26. The method of claim 24, wherein the community is an organizational entity, including a division, department or team.
27. (Amended) The [method] apparatus of claim 1, wherein the electronic asset lending library database resides on a removable data storage device.
28. (Amended) The [method] apparatus of claim [22] 27, wherein the data storage device is a CD-ROM or a DVD-ROM.